

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 15, 2021

1:31 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Roger Holland, Vice Chair
Senator Joshua Revak
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Mia Costello, Chair

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

Board of Barbers and Hairdressers
Holly Andrews - Wasilla
Michelle McMullin - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
David Talerico - Healy
Micheal Dennis - Wasilla
Bronson Frye - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

SENATE BILL NO. 27

"An Act relating to industrial hemp; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 27(L&C) OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 21

"An Act relating to mobile intensive care paramedics; relating to duties of the State Medical Board and the Department of Health and Social Services; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 21 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9

Urging the United States Congress to exempt cruise ships from certain provisions of the Passenger Vessel Services Act and other applicable provisions of federal law for the period during which Canadian ports are closed to cruise ships carrying more than 100 people; and urging the President of the United States not to fine or take actions against cruise ships sailing to the state.

- MOVED CSSJR 9(L&C) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 27

SHORT TITLE: INDUSTRIAL HEMP PROGRAM;MANUFACTURING

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) HUGHES

01/22/21	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21
01/22/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/21	(S)	L&C, RES
03/08/21	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/08/21	(S)	Heard & Held
03/08/21	(S)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/15/21	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

BILL: SB 21

SHORT TITLE: LICENSE MOBILE INTENSIVE CARE PARAMEDICS

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) REVAK

01/22/21	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21
01/22/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/21	(S)	HSS, L&C
03/02/21	(S)	HSS AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/02/21	(S)	Heard & Held
03/02/21	(S)	MINUTE(HSS)
03/04/21	(S)	HSS AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
03/04/21	(S)	Moved SB 21 Out of Committee
03/04/21	(S)	MINUTE(HSS)
03/05/21	(S)	HSS RPT 3DP 1NR
03/05/21	(S)	DP: WILSON, COSTELLO, HUGHES
03/05/21	(S)	NR: BEGICH
03/15/21	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

BILL: SJR 9

SHORT TITLE: URGE EXEMPTION FOR CRUISE SHIPS

SPONSOR(s) : SENATOR(s) KIEHL

02/10/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/10/21	(S)	TRA, L&C
02/18/21	(S)	TRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
02/18/21	(S)	Moved SJR 9 Out of Committee
02/18/21	(S)	MINUTE(TRA)
02/19/21	(S)	TRA RPT 2DP 1NR
02/19/21	(S)	DP: MYERS, KIEHL
02/19/21	(S)	NR: SHOWER
03/03/21	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/03/21	(S)	Scheduled but Not Heard
03/05/21	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/05/21	(S)	Heard & Held
03/05/21	(S)	MINUTE(L&C)
03/15/21	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

WITNESS REGISTER

HOLLY ANDREWS, Appointee

Board of Barbers and Hairdressers

Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the industry seat on the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers.

MICHELLE MCMULLIN, Appointee

Board of Barbers and Hairdressers

Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified for reappointment to the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers.

DAVID TALERICO, Appointee

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)

Healy, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

MICHEAL DENNIS, Appointee

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)

Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

BRONSON FRYE, Appointee
Alaska Workers' Compensation Board
Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

BUDDY WHITT, Staff
Senator Shelley Hughes
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided information and answered questions related to SB 27 on behalf of the sponsor.

EMBER HAYNES, Co-owner
Denali Hemp Co
Talkeetna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 27.

SENATOR JESSE KIEHL
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SJR 9.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:31:00 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS called the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Revak, Holland, Gray-Jackson, and Acting Chair Stevens.

He reviewed the agenda.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) **Board of Barbers and Hairdressers**

[1:32:31 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS announced the consideration of Governor Appointees to the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers. He asked Ms. Andrews to tell the committee about her professional experience and interest in serving on the board.

[1:32:54 PM](#)

HOLLY ANDREWS, Appointee, Board of Barbers and Hairdressers, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), Wasilla, Alaska, stated that she received her license

about four years. Her interest in serving on this relatively new board is to help advance the growing industry. She supports licensees being aware of and educated in all areas of the profession whether they practice in the areas or not.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS asked for the name and location of her shop.

MS. ANDREWS answered that her business is Holly Danielle Esthetics, and she is located in Wasilla. She added that her long-term goal is to open a school to advance the profession.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no questions and thanked Ms. Andrews.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS asked Michelle McMullin to tell the committee about her interest in serving on the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers.

[1:35:11 PM](#)

MICHELLE MCMULLIN, Appointee, Board of Barbers and Hairdressers, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), Anchorage, Alaska, stated that she is testifying for reappointment to the board. She related that she has been a nail technician for more than 25 years and a licensed esthetician for more than 10 years. She has been working to ensure the growth of the beauty industry in Alaska. She has enjoyed serving on the board and helping fellow Alaskans through the pandemic-related economic slump.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS asked how long she had served on the board.

MS. MCMULLIN answered that her first appointment was in 2017.

SENATOR HOLLAND asked where her shop was located.

MS. MCMULLIN answered that she owns Polished Charisma in midtown Anchorage.

SENATOR HOLLAND asked how business has been in midtown and if she sees light at the end of the tunnel.

MS. MCMULLIN replied, it has been a slow process for estheticians in Anchorage.

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON thanked her for having a business in her district. She asked for the exact location.

MS. MCMULLIN answered that she is on 36th Avenue close to Arctic and International.

[1:38:27 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS thanked her for her interest and past service.

[1:38:54 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS opened public testimony on the appointments to the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers. Finding nobody who wished to comment, he closed public testimony on the appointments of Ms. Andrews and Ms. McMullin.

[1:39:05 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND stated that in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration:

Board of Barbers and Hairdressers

Holly Andrews - Wasilla

Michelle McMullin - Anchorage

Signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no objection and the names were forwarded for consideration by the full legislature.

[1:39:43 PM](#)

At ease

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

[1:40:44 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS reconvened the meeting and announced consideration of Governor Appointees to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board. He asked Mr. Talerico to tell the committee about his interest in the appointment to the board.

[1:41:07 PM](#)

DAVID TALERICO, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Healy, Alaska, stated that he has worked as a laborer and heavy equipment operator in the mining industry and is a former

business owner. Thus, he is very familiar with the workers' compensation insurance from both the owner and laborer sides. He has worked as a mine supervisor and is a retired Teamster. He listed the boards he has served on in the past.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS thanked him for his past service and continuing interest in serving the public.

SENATOR REVAK echoed the chair's comments.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no further comments. He asked Michael Dennis to provide a brief history and his interest in serving on Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

1:43:05 PM

MICHEAL DENNIS, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Wasilla, Alaska, stated that he has been in the insurance industry for 30 years and is a partner at Conrad-Houston Insurance in Anchorage. He related that 50 percent of their revenue comes from workers' compensation. He views serving on the board as an opportunity to provide insight on how workers' compensations affects businesses and a way to give back to the industry.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no questions and thanked him for his interest in serving. He asked Bronson Frye to tell the committee about his experience and interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

1:44:30 PM

BRONSON FRYE, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Anchorage, Alaska, stated that he has served on the board for last three years. He related his interest in continuing to serve to ensure the fair treatment of injured workers and to help lower the worker's compensation rates in Alaska, thereby helping small businesses and the overall economy. To attain these goals he works as a labor representative with the industry representatives and the hearing officers to find consensus. This approach has been successful and is indicative of a board that is doing good work and works well together, he said.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS thanked him for his service.

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON noted that Mr. Frye was a friend and thanked him for his service.

[1:47:12 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS opened public testimony on the appointments to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board. Finding none, he closed public testimony on the appointments of David Talerico, Micheal Dennis, and Bronson Frye to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

[1:47:40 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND stated that in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration:

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

David Talerico - Healy

Micheal Dennis - Wasilla

Bronson Frye - Anchorage

Signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no objection and stated that the names would be forwarded to the full legislature.

[1:48:13 PM](#)

At ease

SB 27-INDUSTRIAL HEMP PROGRAM; MANUFACTURING

[1:49:07 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 27, "An Act relating to industrial hemp; and providing for an effective date."

He asked Mr. Whitt to provide any additional comments on SB 27.

[1:49:41 PM](#)

BUDDY WHITT, Staff, Senator Shelley Hughes, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, stated that the sponsor asked him to speak to two items that came up during the initial hearing. The first related to the prohibition for individuals with controlled substance felonies to be part of the program. He read the following federal prohibition:

The federal government requires that each United States department of agriculture approved USDA state plan contain provisions related to felonies. In part, the provisions are required to state that a person with a state or federal felony conviction related to a controlled substance is subject to a 10-year ineligibility restriction on participating in the plan and producing hemp under the state or tribal plan from the date of the conviction.

MR. WHITT said the second item was about a tax on hemp. He emphasized that SB 27 does not recommend a tax of any kind on individuals who decide to grow industrial hemp. There is a fee to grow, manufacture, or retail industrial hemp, but no tax.

[1:52:55 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS opened public testimony on SB 27.

[1:53:39 PM](#)

EMBER HAYNES, Denali Hemp Co, Talkeetna, Alaska, stated that this is the second year that she and her husband have been registered growers in the Alaska Hemp Program. For the last six years, they have represented small acreage producers interested in incorporating industrial hemp as a sustainable crop to provide food, nutrition, and improved soil health. Landowners regularly contact her to ask about growing hemp as feed, for crop rotation, or green manure. She encouraged the passage of SB 27 and the many uses of the hemp plant as an agricultural crop and products not currently considered in the language of the hemp program.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS noted who was available to answer questions.

[1:55:41 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS closed public testimony on SB 27 and solicited a motion.

[1:55:50 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND moved to report SB 27, work order 32-LS0249\A as amended, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no objection and CSSB 27(L&C) passed from the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[1:56:17 PM](#)

At ease

SB 21-LICENSE MOBILE INTENSIVE CARE PARAMEDICS

1:57:44 PM

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 21, "An Act relating to mobile intensive care paramedics; relating to duties of the State Medical Board and the Department of Health and Social Services; and providing for an effective date."

1:58:09 PM

SENATOR JOSH REVAK, speaking as sponsor, introduced SB 21 with the following statement:

SB 21 seeks to consolidate oversight of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system under a single agency to improve peer and professional oversight. This has been years in the making through a deliberative process that involved hundreds of stakeholders throughout the EMS community. It has been unanimously supported by the State Medical Board and has broad support from paramedics around the state.

Currently EMS oversight is split between the State Medical Board within the Department of Commerce and the EMS section within the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). This bill will transfer all paramedic licensure to the Alaska Emergency Medical Services in DHSS, which currently is responsible for certifying EMTs, EMT instructors, EMT training, ground ambulance, medevac services, paramedic instructors, and paramedic training. All the other EMS services except for paramedics.

This split arose because paramedics did not exist in Alaska before 1974. After 1974, the term mobile intensive care paramedic was created for the new scope of practice in the Anchorage and Fairbanks fire departments. The emergency medical services within DHSS did not exist in Alaska code until 1981 when the responsibility to license and credential paramedics was placed under the State Medical Board. In 1984, the EMS section became fully functional; however, the paramedic licensure still stayed under the State Medical Board.

SB 21 will not change the scope of practice, license requirements, or fee structure for the approximately 600 paramedic licenses in Alaska. The medical direction will be provided by the existing DHSS chief medical officer and the EMS medical director's committee comprised of 10 members specializing in emergency medicine, five of whom are required to have paramedic experience. The existing data systems are able to incorporate paramedic licensure, making the move a seamless transition.

Transferring oversight and licensure of mobile intensive care paramedics from the State Medical Board to DHSS will fully integrate the EMS system and ensure it is robust, sustainable, and resilient so that it functions optimally. Aligning all EMS services under a single agency promotes public health and safety while also providing efficiencies through peer and professional oversight.

SENATOR REVAK summarized that SB 21 has the same language as the bill the committee heard last year. It moves paramedics under the structure with the rest of the emergency medical services. He said he is unaware of any opposition to the legislation.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS polled the members and determined it was not necessary to go through the sectional analysis.

[2:02:30 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS opened public testimony on SB 21. Finding nobody who wished to comment, he closed public testimony and solicited the will of the committee.

[2:03:02 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND moved to report SB 21, work order 32-LS0207\B, from committee with individual recommendations and attached zero fiscal note(s).

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no objection and SB 21 passed from the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[2:03:52 PM](#)

At ease

SJR 9-URGE EXEMPTION FOR CRUISE SHIPS

[2:03:57 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9, Urging the United States Congress to exempt cruise ships from certain provisions of the Passenger Vessel Services Act and other applicable provisions of federal law for the period during which Canadian ports are closed to cruise ships carrying more than 100 people; and urging the President of the United States not to fine or take actions against cruise ships sailing to the state.

[The committee adopted Amendment 1, work order 32-LS0503\B.1, on 3/5/21.]

[2:05:38 PM](#)

SENATOR JESSE KIEHL, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SJR 9, stated that since the committee heard the legislation last, Congress learned that the reconciliation package it was considering was not an acceptable vehicle for this legislation. He said the Alaska delegation is working to find another vehicle and he would encourage committee to move SJR 9 forward to get it to the delegation as soon as possible.

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no questions or comments and solicited the will of the committee.

[2:06:59 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND moved to report SJR 9, work order 32-LS0503\B as amended, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[2:07:18 PM](#)

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS found no objection and CSSJR 9(L&C) passed from the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[2:07:28 PM](#)

At ease

2:09:16 PM

ACTING CHAIR STEVENS reconvened the meeting and stated that without further business to come before the committee, the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting at 2:09 p.m.